

LEARNING RESOURCES

Enhancing Language and Communications Skills

The Department of Language & Communication conducted a total of 18 modules including five general elective modules (GEMs) to increase students' creative and communication skills. On top of that, the Department ran a total of 35 workshops for students, 16 workshops for staff, offered 31 remedial lessons for foreign languages, 36 debate training sessions as well as organised talks, visits and movie screenings. All these were to ensure that students received a well-rounded and value-added education.

Ms Claire Chiang, Co-Chairperson of Romancing Singapore gave a talk on 7 April 2004 as part of the National Education series.

The Department's Business Communication Centre ran a number of courses for external organisations, such as 'Effective Reports and Proposals' for the National Council of Social Services and 'The Basics: Speak and Be Understood' for employees of the International Monetary Fund. There were also 34 runs of the Foreign Domestic Worker Employers' Orientation Programme.

Staff also made learning of foreign languages engaging through fun activities such as French movie screenings and *Haiku* writing workshops, just to name a few.



▲ Guest speaker Ms Claire Chiang engaging about 300 students on issues of romance, boy-girl relationships and family life at a National Education talk.



▲ Fun activities to kindle students' interest in foreign languages.



▲ Participants of the School Teachers Enrichment Programme or STEP getting a peek of what goes on in the academic schools.

Enriching Knowledge in Maths and Science

The year in review saw the launch of new courses and revamping of existing ones by the Department of Mathematics & Science.

The Diploma Plus Certificate in Engineering Mathematics programme was one such initiative. Another was the Specialist Diploma in Statistics & Data Mining, previously known as the Specialist Diploma in Statistics & Information Management.

With the Certificate in Engineering Mathematics, graduates could get advanced standing at renowned overseas universities like Australia's Curtin University of Technology and Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology.

Staff of the Department also took on the challenge of organising the School Teachers Enrichment Programme or STEP and SP Microsoft Office Skills Certification Examination and Challenge 2005. Another event, Maths Qooooo 2005 demonstrated to secondary school students that Mathematics could be fun and stimulating.

Furthering Curriculum Development

For the strategic thrust of Formulating an Education Model of the Future, the Department of Educational & Staff Development was tasked to lead the strategic initiative to infuse key process/life skills and dispositions into the curriculum. A pilot project involving eight diplomas across the seven academic schools would be initiated.

Also, consultancy services were provided to academic schools and departments in the development of curriculum and teaching materials as well as improvement of teaching effectiveness. These included the development of a set of rubrics to measure creativity components in students' final-year project work.

In a collaborative project with the School of Electrical & Electronic Engineering, lessons were remodelled to integrate tutorial teaching with laboratory work using a project-based approach. Concepts and principles were illustrated concretely and in an interesting way to motivate students, with a mini project as a culminating exercise. Work to develop e-learning material to support lessons was also initiated.



▲ Myriad training programmes to hone the teaching skills of staff.

Using Technology in Teaching and Learning

The Centre for Interactive Learning Technologies (CILT) was formed in 2004 to champion the Polytechnic's initiatives in e-learning and to promote the use of IT for education. Through the Centre, the Department of Educational & Staff Development collaborated closely with various e-learning committees, schools and departments to conceptualise and implement pedagogically-viable blended learning and teaching approaches.

It also conducted workshops to empower academic staff in using the interactive learning technologies to develop and conduct e-learning courses effectively on the Polytechnic's Blackboard e-learning platform. In addition, it supported the schools' curriculum, e-learning projects and distance learning programmes for local and overseas students, alumni and industry.

To support technology-enabled learning in the academic schools and departments, the Department continued to provide technical expertise, quality facilities and rich media services, such as video, audio, graphics and animation, in the production of training and presentation materials, video and CD-ROM packages.

Promoting Professional Development

To continually enhance the professional expertise of academic staff, the Department of Educational & Staff Development conducted a total of 148 workshops and drop-in sessions, attracting a total attendance of 1,696 participants. The workshops were organised under five main programmes:

- Certificate in Teaching (Higher Education)
- Advanced Certificate in Teaching (Higher Education)
- Certificate in IT for Teaching (Foundation)
- Specialised IT and Pedagogy Programmes
- Part-time Lecturers Training and Support

The Advanced Certificate in Teaching was redesigned as a competency-based programme to encourage creative and innovative practices in teaching, learning and assessment.

Online support was provided for all part-time lecturers in Singapore Polytechnic to supplement the established programme of workshops. The Department also organised seven Education Roundtable sessions to identify new developments in teaching, learning and IT, and to evaluate their usefulness to teaching and learning in the Polytechnic.



▲ Use of technology to facilitate learning among students such as video production.



▲ Vibrant Colours @ SP Zone, which was opened by Mayor of South West District Dr Amy Khor, is well equipped to support teaching and learning of new General Elective Modules (GEMs).

Remaking the Library

Major changes were made to the Library during the year. Foremost was the setting-up of the Colours @ SP Zone. Living up to its name, the area had colourful mosaic walls with images of campus life, attractive posters and inspiring quotes. The Zone, equipped with facilities for reading, discussion, music and movie appreciation, and Internet surfing, was set up primarily to support the new General Elective Modules (GEMs).

Two levels of the Main Library were given a refreshing layout with vibrant graphics and eye-catching displays of new arrivals and student projects. The outdoor courtyard was also revamped, with new furniture and refreshment facilities providing a relaxing atmosphere for social interaction. This was in line with the Library's aim of creating a new experience for users.

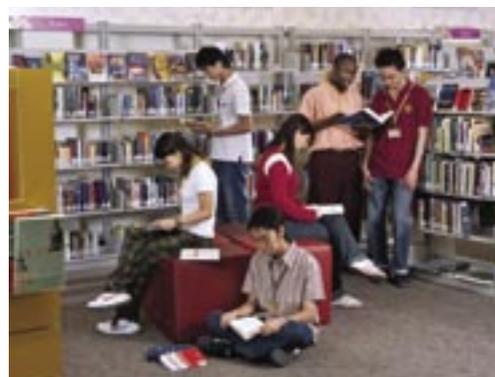
Another enhancement was the addition of over 450 PCs in the Main and BizIT libraries. Sixty-four Quick Access PCs were made available for short term use with no booking required. In addition, 10 project rooms were equipped with PCs. Both libraries offered wireless access for students with laptops.

The Electronic Library Information Services and Resources (ELISER) system was revamped and integrated with existing services and the Library's homepage, along with a host of new e-services. The Library Online catalogue was also improved to accommodate an array of new search features.

Visits to the Library reached 963,569, a marked increase of 29% compared to the previous year. Loans of materials rose by 16% to 249,915. In addition, it was given a 98% satisfaction rating by users in two separate customer surveys.



▲ Visits to the Library up 29% from previous year.



▲ High satisfaction rating from users of the Library.



▲ Special appreciation to supporters of the Polytechnic's Industrial Training Programme.

Making the Most of Learning

With strong support from academic schools and departments, as well as external partners, a wide range of training courses was offered by the Department of Industry Services' Continuing Education Centre for working adults. A total of 580 courses were conducted during the year to upgrade the knowledge and skills of 25,271 participants.

For full-time students, 251 of them had the chance to take part in the Overseas Industrial Training Programme. They fulfilled their industrial attachments in countries like China, Germany, India, Japan, Vietnam and UK.

At the Industrial Training Programme Participation Award Presentation Ceremony, 73 companies received awards from Dr Amy Khor, Mayor of South West District in appreciation of their support.

New programmes initiated included the 55 @ SP Entrepreneurship Talk and Networking Series, the 33 @ SP IDEA MarketPlace and Exchange and the Entrepreneurship Talent Development Fund scheme.



▲ Mr Jack Sim, President of Restroom Association of Singapore and Founder of World Toilet, sharing his views at a 55 @ SP entrepreneurship talk and networking session.